IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly rewrite Claims 1-24 as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121:

1-11. (Canceled).

12. (Currently amended) A method for producing L- threonine comprising:

A) cultivating in a culture medium an L-threonine-producing *Escherichia coli* ~~strain~~bacterium, wherein the bacterium has been modified to increase the expression of:

i) ~~an~~ the aspartate aminotransferase gene encoding the protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO. 2,

ii) the *Escherichia coli thrA* gene which codes for an aspartokinase homoserine dehydrogenase I which is resistant to feedback inhibition by threonine,

iii) the *Escherichia coli thrB* gene,

iv) the *Escherichia coli thrC* gene, and

v) the *Escherichia coli rhtA* gene,

wherein said expression of said genes is increased by a method selected from the group consisting of increasing the copy number of said gene, and ~~modifying an expression control sequence of said gene~~placing said gene under the control of a potent promoter, ~~wherein said gene encodes a protein comprising the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 2,~~ and

B) collecting the L-threonine from the culture medium.

13-14. (Canceled).

15. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 12, wherein said expression of the aspartate aminotransferase gene is increased by increasing the copy number of the aspartate aminotransferase gene.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the copy number is increased by transforming said bacterium with a low copy number vector containing said gene.

17-18. (Canceled).

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 12, wherein said aspartate aminotransferase gene comprises a DNA comprising the nucleotides 1 to 1191 in SEQ ID NO: 1.

20-22. (Canceled).

23. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 12, wherein ~~modification of an expression control sequence of the gene is placing the gene under~~ the ~~control of~~ apotent promoter is selected from the group consisting of the lac promoter, trp promoter, trc promoter, PR promoter, and PL promoter.

24. (Canceled).